



Woodcraft Folk Group Activities: Briefing for Group Leaders, April 2021

Overview

This briefing summarises the current position with regard to the expected gradual lifting of restrictions in place to control the transmission of Covid-19, and the implications of these for the planning of future Woodcraft Folk group and residential activities.

In **England** the government has announced a stepped approach to the easing of restrictions. While potential dates have been widely communicated in respect of each of these steps, it is vital to remember that these are the *earliest* dates at which the steps will be implemented, and progression to the next step will always be dependent on certain data-driven thresholds being reached. There is currently no suggestion that there will be a return to regional tiers of regulation.

In **Scotland** the government has also set out steps to reduce the lockdown restrictions, but with the expectation that the country will return to differing restrictions based on **local protection levels**, allowing greater flexibility to respond to different rates of infection in different areas. It is expected that face-to-face delivery will be permitted in areas that are at level 3 or below.

In **Wales**, the **stay local** restrictions were lifted from 27 March, and organised outdoor activities for children and young people are now permitted.

Woodcraft Folk's approach, like that of all youth work organisations, continues to be shaped by the guidance issued by the National Youth Agency, YouthLink Scotland and the Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services.

For the remainder of the academic year, Woodcraft Folk expects to continue to provide a 'blended offer' of programme activities to our young members, including:

- Remote programme activities, supported by #DreamBigAtHome
- Online programme activities, locally and nationally
- Where permitted, and subject to maximum numbers, socially distanced outdoor activities
- Where permitted, and subject to maximum numbers, socially distanced indoor activities
- If permitted, carefully planned and managed camping or residential opportunities (no earlier than summer 2021)

No arrangements should be made for international exchange visits as part of Woodcraft Folk activity without the express permission of the [Chief Executive](#).

#DreamBigAtHome

Online provision via dreambigathome.uk will continue, with a mix of weekly challenges and live programme sessions. The activity pages contain a wide range of activities that are searchable by theme and by suitability for online, outdoor or socially-distanced delivery.

Supporting Young Members

As always, if you are concerned about any of the young people in the group(s) you work with, please contact Woodcraft Folk's safeguarding team by emailing safeguarding@woodcraft.org.uk so we can discuss how we can best meet their support needs.

Resuming Face-to-Face Provision

As restrictions ease, group leaders need to consider not just what is permitted by the regulations, but balance carefully the benefits of resuming activities against the increased risks of transmission they will give rise to. This may be affected by particular circumstances, e.g. the vulnerability of young people or volunteers, leading different groups to come to different conclusions about the appropriate time to resume face-to-face provision.

So that Woodcraft Folk can provide appropriate support to groups and ensure that adequate insurance cover is in place, group leaders/co-ordinators *must* complete the [Reopening Checklist](#) before resuming any face-to-face provision. This will involve confirming that your group has registered for 2021, and sharing your risk assessment for the sessions that you intend to deliver.

If you require further support or advice please contact membership@woodcraft.org.uk.

The remainder of this document is focused on the guidance for delivery of children's activities in Wales as announced by the Government on 26 March 2021.

Guidance for Gwerin y Coed Groups

Organised activities for children and young people are now permitted to take place outdoors. There is no upper limit on numbers, but groups should be mindful of the necessary ratios to support young people and the space available.

Parents should only attend where children are too young to participate independently - otherwise only volunteers with a clear role should be part of delivering the session.

Social distancing should be observed wherever possible. While there is an acceptance that young children may not be able to maintain social distance at all times you should plan activities that don't encourage close contact so that risk is minimised.

There is no requirement for face coverings to be worn during outdoor activities, though in situations where social distance cannot be observed these should be worn to minimise risk of transmission.

Travelling to attend sessions is permitted for both volunteers and participants, though car-sharing between households is strongly discouraged.

Plans for age group camps at Biblins are being worked on by a small group of volunteers for the weeks of 1-7 and 8-14 August, which may be an attractive alternative to the potential risks of planning a camp as a group or district.

Before commencing any face-to-face delivery, group leaders must ensure that:

- The group is fully registered with Woodcraft Folk for 2021, with your group co-ordinator and safeguarding lead for the group identified
- You have permission from the owner of your venue (whether indoors or outdoors) to start meeting again
- A written risk assessment has been completed for the planned activities, detailing the procedures in place for controlling all relevant risks, including transmission of Covid-19. This should be emailed to safeguarding@woodcraft.org.uk and shared with all volunteers *before* face-to-face activities commence

Failure to comply with the above expectations will mean that your activities are not covered by Woodcraft Folk's insurance.

The Welsh Government has yet to set out a roadmap for further easing of restrictions on youth work provision, so there is currently no information on when indoor provision or camping/residential trips can resume. No indoor or residential activities should be delivered at this time, and you are *strongly advised* not to

make firm plans or financial commitments for residential activities before more information is available.

Requirements for Resuming Face-to-Face Delivery

Details of the Government's guidance for children's activities can be found in the [FAQ document](#) published on the gov.wales website. You should familiarise yourself with this before commencing any face-to-face delivery.

While it is based on the guidance for groups in England, the [NYA Guidance document](#) is a more detailed overview for youth work providers of the risks and challenges of providing Covid-safe activities, and is therefore a helpful guide to setting up your provision. In particular, Gwerin y Coed groups are required to meet the same expectations to minimise risk and satisfy the requirements of the organisation's public liability insurance, i.e.:

- An action plan in place detailing roles and responsibilities of volunteers and participants
- Up-to-date risk assessment for your activity
- Manageable groups sizes, with due regard to the age and support needs of young people
- Appropriate hygiene procedures (e.g. handwashing facilities)
- Social distancing is observed
- 'Test, Trace, Protect' information is gathered from people attending

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